United Nations S/2015/626

Security Council

Distr.: General
13 August 2015

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2203 (2015), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) until 29 February 2016 and requested me to submit to it reports on the implementation of the resolution every six months. In addition to presenting the status of the implementation of the mandate, the report also provides an update on key political, security, human rights, socioeconomic and humanitarian developments in Guinea-Bissau since my report of 19 January 2015 (S/2015/37).

II. Major developments in Guinea-Bissau

A. Political situation

2. During the period under review, the political situation in Guinea-Bissau remained calm for the most part, although marked by growing disagreements among the organs of sovereignty and within the main political party, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC), notably between the President and the Prime Minister.

3. On 16 February, the 28 members of the ad hoc Commission on Constitutional Reform took office in a ceremony chaired by the President of the National Assembly, Cipriano Cassamá. The Commission consists of 10 members of Parliament, 4 representatives of civil society, and one representative each from the Office of the Prime Minister, the Office of the President of the Republic, the Supreme Court and the Office of the Prosecutor General, supported by 10 staff of the National Assembly, who provide legal technical assistance. The Commission is expected to prepare a revised draft Constitution within a year to be submitted to public consultation before its final adoption by the National Assembly.

4. On 10 and 11 March, the Government held the Forum Bissau, 2025 Vision: Positive Guinea-Bissau, in preparation for the international partners' round table in Brussels on 25 March. At the opening ceremony, the President, José Mário Vaz,

Please recycle

expressed his full and unconditional support to the Government for the organization of the round table and appealed to the international community to continue supporting Guinea-Bissau. On 12 March, the Prime Minister, Domingos Simões Pereira, presented the Strategic and Operational Plan 2015-2020 to the National Assembly and outlined the Government's vision for the development of Guinea-Bissau.

5. On 25 March, the Government of Guinea-Bissau organized the international partners' round table for Guinea-Bissau in Brussels, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Union. Over 70 delegations representing countries, multilateral organizations, international financial institutions, regional organizations and representatives of civil society participated in the event. Pledges amounting to $1.2 billion were made in support of the Government's Strategic and Operational Plan 2015-2020. The Government's plan provides a clear basis for reform of key areas such as defence, security and justice and economic and social development and aims to lay the foundations for long-lasting stability and sustainable development in Guinea-Bissau. On the eve of the round table, the Council of the European Union lifted measures which had limited European Union aid to the country since July 2011 over concerns of impunity.

6. On 2 April, the Prime Minister briefed the National Assembly on the outcome of the round table, attributing its success to the mobilization of the whole of Guinea-Bissau society around a common objective. He noted that the international community had sent a clear signal of sustained support to the stabilization of Guinea-Bissau. At the end of the briefing, the Assembly adopted a motion of confidence in support of the Government. On 7 April, the Prime Minister briefed national, international, bilateral and multilateral partners, expressing the Government's intent to create strong coordination mechanisms to thoroughly monitor the use, organization and coordination of the funding pledged at the round table.

7. On 18 May, the 32 members of the Organizing Commission of the National Conference towards the Consolidation of Peace and Development took their oath at a ceremony chaired by the President of the National Assembly and attended by my Special Representative and Head of UNIOGBIS, Miguel Trovoada, and members of the diplomatic community. In his speech, the President of the Commission, Father Domingos da Fonseca, stressed that peace was a precondition for national development and would require the effort of all the people of Guinea-Bissau. The President of the National Assembly highlighted the importance of reconciling with the past, but stressed that truth-seeking should not be turned into a witch-hunt. He also stressed that the country must tackle the causes of violence and inequality so that all citizens can enjoy dignified lives. He referred to the need for the Commission to bear in mind the possibility of providing an amnesty as one of the instruments that could lead to national reconciliation. On 9 June, the Organizing Commission convened its first meeting and decided to organize a retreat in Canchungo (Cacheu region) from 10 to 12 July. During the retreat, the Commission outlined a work plan leading to the holding of a national conference in 2016, and the subsequent establishment of follow-up mechanisms for conflict resolution. The Commission identified several causes of conflict in Guinea-Bissau, including power struggle among groups, ethnic tension and intolerance.

8. On 19 May, the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) held its forty-seventh ordinary

session in Accra, where it strongly encouraged the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to pursue their structural reforms and expressed satisfaction at the success of the international partners' round table. ECOWAS encouraged international partners to honour their pledges and expressed its commitment to continue supporting the implementation of the defence and security sector reform programme. Furthermore, ECOWAS decided to extend the mandate of its Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) until 31 December 2015 and requested the President of the Commission to continue his démarches to raise funds from development partners to support ECOMIB.

9. From 28 to 30 May, the President hosted a State visit by King Mohammed VI of Morocco to Guinea-Bissau. King Mohammed VI was accompanied by a large delegation of representatives of government and business. The two countries signed 16 bilateral agreements regarding fisheries, agriculture, internal security, local governance, infrastructure, solar energy and health during the visit. Morocco also donated 4 million doses of animal vaccines and 12 tons of drugs to treat tuberculosis and other illnesses in Guinea-Bissau. In addition, a Moroccan medical team provided free consultations and surgical interventions at the Simão Mendes National Hospital in Bissau.

10. On 30 May, the Council of Ministers held a special session for the first time in Bafatá. The Government intends to hold further special sessions outside Bissau, bringing together regional and local authorities to adopt their respective regional development plans.

11. On 12 June, the President presided over a swearing-in ceremony of 13 members of the Council of State, the highest advisory body in Guinea-Bissau. The Council of State is a consultative political organ of the President of the Republic, competent to issue advisory opinions on the dissolution of the National Assembly, the declaration of a state of emergency, the dismissal of the Government, or the declaration of war, as well as to advise the Head of the State in the exercise of his/her functions upon his/her request.

12. On 20 and 21 June, the Central Committee of PAIGC convened to discuss the party's internal situation, and decided, inter alia, (a) to replace the party's National Secretary, Abel da Silva, with Aly Hijazy; (b) to appoint Manuel Santos as President of the Organizing Commission of the party's National Convention; (c) to adopt a motion of confidence on its leadership; and (d) to request its Third Vice-President, Baciro Dja, to submit a financial report of the party's electoral campaign of 2014. On 23 June, Mr. Dja resigned from his position of Minister of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

13. In response to the concerns of the international partners about the political situation and recurrent rumours of the imminent dismissal of the Government, the Prime Minister hosted on 24 June a working dinner for the diplomatic corps in Bissau. In his address, the Prime Minister acknowledged the existence of tensions that had slowed down the implementation of the decisions of the international partners' round table. Recalling the PAIGC Central Committee's requests for institutional dialogue, he expressed his intention to immediately discuss the current situation with the President of the Republic. On 25 June, at the request of the Government, the National Assembly held an emergency debate, and unanimously adopted a motion of confidence in the Government.

14. On 3 July, the President denied in a televised address allegations that he had intended to dismiss the Government of Prime Minister Pereira. This put an end to months of political uncertainty and is expected to help to accelerate the implementation of the Government's Strategic and Operational Plan 2015-2020.

15. During the first week of August, the political situation in Guinea-Bissau became more tense as a result of the widening rift between the President and the Prime Minister. On 6 August, the Prime Minister held a conference with representatives of the international community during which he announced his intention to preserve the outcome of the elections. Later that day, he reiterated this message in an address to the nation. The following day, the President also held a meeting with the diplomatic community in Bissau, at which he criticized the performance of the Government and acknowledged that the country was facing a serious crisis that hampered the normal functioning of State institutions. On 8 August, the political bureau of PAIGC, which supported the candidacy of President Vaz, held an extraordinary meeting and issued a statement calling for the immediate re-establishment of meaningful dialogue, in particular by the President of the Republic. It strongly condemned the President's actions and warned of a possible withdrawal of confidence. Moreover, the second largest political party, the Party for Social Renewal, issued a similar statement on 5 August, expressing solidarity with the Government, while blaming PAIGC for the status quo. In view of these developments, I personally reached out to President Vaz and other regional leaders, stressing that the political differences in Guinea-Bissau must be resolved in a peaceful, collaborative and constructive way. My Special Representative also continued to call on all actors to resume dialogue and place the national interest above personal differences.

16. Two members of the Cabinet have been put under investigation by the Office of the Prosecutor General for suspicion of fraud and economic crimes. The Secretary of State for International Cooperation and Communities was detained on 4 June because of his alleged involvement in the irregular issuing of diplomatic and service passports. He was released conditionally on 6 June. On 9 July, the Foreign Minister was summoned by the Office of the Prosecutor General, ordered to pay a bond of approximately $167,000 and had his passport withdrawn pending investigation. On 13 July, the National Secretariat of PAIGC issued a communiqué expressing its concern about the "systematic attacks against members of the Government by the Office of the Prosecutor General on the grounds of their alleged involvement in corruption cases" and called on the organs of sovereignty to respect the presumption of innocence.

B. Security situation

17. The overall security situation in the country remained stable during the reporting period, and the Government continued with the implementation of its reform programmes. On 6 March, Ambassador Octávio Alves, Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was appointed as Minister of Internal Administration. The post had been vacant since the dismissal of Botche Candé in November 2014. A jurist trained in Portugal, Mr. Alves had been Prosecutor General and was Secretary of State for Public Order during the Government of Carlos Gomes Jr.

18. On 14 May, the Council of Ministers, upon a proposal of the Minister of Internal Administration, dismissed the Commissioner General of the Public Order Police, Brigadier General Armando Nhaga, and the General Commander of the National Guard, Brigadier General Tomás Djassi. Both had been confirmed in their respective functions after the 2012 coup. Superintendent José António Marques, until that time the Inspector General of the Ministry of Internal Administration, was sworn in as the new Commissioner General of the Public Order Police on 15 May. The new General Commander of the National Guard, also sworn in on 15 May, is Brigadier General Armando da Costa Marna, who was until then serving as Deputy to the dismissed General Commander.

C. Human rights situation

19. During the reporting period, very little progress was made in the investigation of, and in establishing accountability mechanisms for, past serious human rights violations. A notable exception was the prosecution of four police officers charged with the beating of a civilian who died on 20 September 2014. On 25 May, the Regional Court of Bissau held the second session of the trial, questioning two suspects, a major and a sergeant. During the trial session, on 15 June, the former heads of the Public Order Police and the National Guard were to be heard as witnesses. However they failed to appear and the hearing was cancelled. They were subsequently notified and heard as witnesses on 22 June at the Regional Court of Bissau, and the trial will continue after the hearing of forensic experts scheduled for July.

20. Violence against women and children, in particular forced marriage, rape, domestic violence and female genital mutilation, remains a serious concern in Guinea-Bissau. According to the *African Report on Violence against Children*, jointly launched on 11 February by the African Union, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations and the African Child Policy Forum, 34 per cent of girls are subjected to forced marriage in the country. Local non-governmental organizations estimate that 80 per cent of those cases occur in the eastern regions. It should be noted that in most of the cases law enforcement and judicial authorities are unable to take action owing to the lack of material and human resources, coupled with hostility from community members.

21. In a positive development, progress was made in the implementation of the Law against Female Genital Mutilation, enacted in July 2011. On 16 May, 10 female cutters (*fanatecas*) committed to abandoning this harmful practice and to denouncing and reporting any cases of which they became aware. The commitment was made at a public ceremony organized by Djinopi, a local non-governmental organization, and UNIOGBIS partners working on the eradication of female genital mutilation. Moreover, on 26 May, the Regional Court of Bafatá delivered its verdict in relation to the genital mutilation of eight girls, aged between 11 months and 7 years, in Ganadu (Bafatá region) in mid-January. The parents of the girls (three women and a man) were sentenced to three years' imprisonment for the crime of female genital mutilation. A fifth defendant was acquitted, the court citing insufficient evidence. The Prosecutor indicated that he would appeal the acquittal. This is the third case of female genital mutilation to be prosecuted since the enactment of the Law. UNIOGBIS, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are working closely with civil society and the authorities in the fight against female genital mutilation.

22. On 1 June, the first case under the Law against Domestic Violence was brought to court. The Women and Children Brigade of the Judiciary Police arrested a woman from the Missira neighbourhood of Bissau for extreme child abuse. The police forwarded the case to the Office of the Prosecutor General, who confirmed his intention to prosecute, and released the suspect subject to periodic reporting before a competent authority.

23. Breaches of the rights of persons deprived of their liberty were among the most serious and recurrent human rights violations throughout the reporting period. Conditions in prisons and detention centres, including police cells, continue to deteriorate. Regular monitoring visits reveal severe overcrowding; lack of access to legal and medical assistance; disregard for due process, many persons being detained without charge or beyond the legal maximum periods; absence of potable water, toilets and hygiene facilities; cells without sunlight or ventilation; and overall poorly maintained physical infrastructure. These conditions amount to cruel and inhuman treatment, and fall far short of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, as well as the National Minimum Standards for the Treatment of Detainees. UNIOGBIS is compiling a report containing these findings and making recommendations for improvement, which will be made available to the Ministers of Justice and Internal Administration.

D. Social, economic and humanitarian situation

24. Although fragile, the recent socioeconomic evolution in Guinea-Bissau is encouraging. Increased revenue and the re-establishing of international financial flows have allowed the Government to resume settling a number of arrears. According to the International Monetary Fund and UNDP, customs and tax revenue improved sharply in 2014 (by 39 per cent and 9 per cent, respectively), as the Government tightened controls over fuel imports and streamlined tax exemptions (mainly on fuel), rehabilitated customs posts and intensified the auditing of large taxpayers. To date, almost all salary arrears and public servants' salaries are being paid regularly. At the same time, the Government cleared all external arrears, excluding technical and membership arrears to several international organizations. Despite this recent improvement, domestic revenue mobilization remains fragile and the tax gap is still large. The inefficient public electricity and water company (EAGB) puts enormous pressure on public finance. In 2015, the Government is making transfers of CFAF 2.8 billion (some $4.8 million) to EAGB to cover current and past losses. Despite price increases observed in food stuffs, particularly cereal products and fruit in the first quarter of 2015, inflation remains muted. Growth is projected to average 4.7 per cent in 2015.

25. The Government's Strategic and Operational Plan 2015-2020 and the results of the international partners' round table are a key basis for coherent engagement and mobilization of partners in line with the principle of aid efficiency. The United Nations, through the office of the Resident Coordinator, is supporting the Government in reinforcing its coordination and mobilization capacity.

26. In terms of sustainable development, the Ministry of the Environment, supported by the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

Nations (FAO) and UNDP, launched, in May 2015, the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Guinea-Bissau. The purpose is to guarantee forest conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. To mitigate the impact of climate change, the Ministry of the Environment has opened a Meteorological and Climatological Centre in Gabú region, a contribution of the Global Environment Facility through UNDP.

27. Cashew nuts continue to be the main export of Guinea-Bissau and one of the main sources of income for many families, especially in rural areas. The 2015 campaign was launched officially on 18 April and to date is considered promising. The Government has announced a set of measures to fight against the smuggling of cashew nuts. The Government expects to export 200,000 tons in 2015 at a price of $1,100 per ton against 136, 000 tons exported in 2014.

28. Following the poor harvest in the 2014/15 agricultural campaign, a rapid impact assessment on food and nutritional security of the most vulnerable households in the eight regions of the country was undertaken in March. Over 90 per cent of the surveyed households reported that the crop yields for the 2014/15 agricultural season had fallen considerably compared to the previous campaign, thereby adversely affecting their food supply, 51 per cent of the households indicating they had only one month's cereal stocks. The assessment revealed that 80 per cent of households surveyed in the most affected regions — Cacheu, Oio, Bafatá and Gabú — reported not having enough seed stocks for the crop year 2015/16. The efforts to reduce food and nutrition insecurity in the country have been led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development with the support of the World Food Programme (WFP) and FAO. The results of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of Guinea-Bissau for 2014, published in April 2015 by the Ministry of the Economy and Finance and the National Statistics Institute, with UNICEF support, provide comprehensive data for addressing the provision of services in education, health and social protection.

29. To date, no confirmed cases of Ebola virus disease have been reported in Guinea-Bissau. However, the country remains at high risk. Efforts to scale up the preparedness and early response capacity are critical if the country is to contain such a threat. A national coordination mechanism has been established and United Nations agencies and partners, including UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Ministry of Health of Portugal and others, are providing direct support to implement Ebola virus disease prevention and early response measures. On 24 and 25 June, my acting Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response visited Guinea-Bissau to take stock of the current Ebola virus disease prevention and preparedness efforts in the country and evaluate with the Government how the United Nations can further mobilize support. Following his visit, he called on the national authorities to enhance their coordination, and on the population to remain vigilant. An inter-agency mission comprising representatives of the Centers for Disease Control, WHO, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and WFP was deployed to help to enhance the coordination of all actors at the national, local and cross-border levels, and to bolster preparedness and early response capacities.

III. Status of implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau

A. Inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation process

30. On 9 April, UNIOGBIS supported the organization of a retreat of the outgoing Organizing Commission of the National Conference towards the Consolidation of Peace and Development to review the work undertaken since its previous retreat late in 2014 and prepare the handover to the new members of the Commission who would take up their functions on 18 May. The outgoing Commission recommended, inter alia, the launching of a public outreach programme to clarify the objectives of the Commission, the updating of the Commission's internal regulations, and the establishment of its own budget and premises funded by the Government. These recommendations were submitted to the new Commission as handover notes.

B. Strategic and technical advice and support to national authorities in implementing the national security sector reform and rule of law strategies

31. During the period under review, UNIOGBIS has co-chaired, hosted and supported the meetings of the International Partners Working Group on security sector reform, as well as the United Nations Peacebuilding and Development Assistance Framework sessions on the rule of law and comprehensive security sector reform, aimed at ensuring a coordinated approach among international partners supporting security sector reform and the rule of law.

32. Upon the request of the Government of Guinea-Bissau, an African Union-led joint security sector assessment mission was conducted from 2 to 12 March. The mission comprised representatives of the African Union, the United Nations, ECOWAS, the European Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the African Security Sector Network. The mission aimed at identifying priority areas for support of security sector reform and opportunities for stakeholders and partners willing to support a nationally-led, inclusive and comprehensive reform of the security sector. The recommendations of the mission will align with existing security sector reform guidance developed by the African Union, the United Nations and ECOWAS to improve accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness, as well as to strengthen democratic control of security institutions in Guinea-Bissau.

33. From 2 March to 31 May, UNIOGBIS supported the Arms and Ammunitions Department of the Armed Forces of Guinea-Bissau in registering military weapons in the private possession of members of the Armed Forces. The Army invited all personnel on active duty, on reserve or retired, and the dependents of the deceased former freedom fighters to declare any military weapon in their possession for registration purposes. UNIOGBIS also assisted the Arms and Ammunitions Department in carrying out a public awareness campaign, through the printing and distribution of posters and the broadcasting of radio messages in Portuguese, Creole, Fulani, Mandinka and Balanta in the eastern and southern regions of the country.

34. On 21 April, the President promulgated the Decree Law on the establishment of the Special Pension Fund for the armed forces and security institutions, which had been approved by the Council of Ministers on 26 February. The newly approved Decree Law abrogates Decree Law No. 9/2010 of 5 April 2010 on the establishment of the special fund. UNIOGBIS provided technical support in the drafting, reviewing and publication of the new Decree Law, which contains two main components, namely a pension and a one-time gratuity. The proposed financial package would be funded by international partners, together with a 10 per cent government contribution. The Decree Law paves the way for the demobilization through retirement of up to 1,498 personnel of the total of 2,282 to be demobilized. The personnel to be demobilized that are not eligible for the Special Pension Fund would benefit from a reintegration mechanism. The Government has confirmed its determination to retire 500 military and security personnel by the end of 2015, contingent on partners' funding.

35. From 12 to 15 May, UNIOGBIS continued to carry out the national security sector reform public awareness programme, targeting more than 700 additional people in the southern regions. The programme serves to advance dialogue, trust-building and mutual learning between national institutions, the civilian population and international actors. It aims to strengthen oversight as part of ongoing efforts in security sector reform and the rule of law.

C. United Nations good offices

36. My Special Representative made full use of his good offices to help to build confidence between stakeholders and contribute to preventing an escalation of tensions. He has continued to engage key national stakeholders, in particular the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament. He has also consulted regularly with political parties and civil society, including women's and youth organizations, as well as religious leaders, trade unions and private sector representatives in close coordination with international and regional actors, including ECOWAS.

D. Support to the Government of Guinea-Bissau in the mobilization, harmonization and coordination of international assistance

37. My Special Representative has continued to chair monthly meetings with the international partners based in Bissau to coordinate support to Guinea-Bissau. On 27 February, he chaired such a meeting in advance of the international partners' round table. Participants exchanged views on the contents of the Government's Strategic and Operational Plan 2015-2020. The Minister of the Economy and the Secretary of State for Planning and Development participated in the discussion to resolve for the international partners any doubts arising from the document. On 10 April, my Special Representative convened a meeting of the consultative group of the round table, attended by representatives of the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, ECOWAS and the European Union in Bissau, and of the World Bank based in Dakar. On 14 April, he chaired a debriefing meeting with the international partners based in Bissau during which the follow-up to the round table was discussed.

38. On 7 May, my Special Representative met the President of Senegal, Macky Sall, in Dakar for a discussion and update on the political stabilization process in Guinea-Bissau, including the role played by ECOWAS. My Special Representative informed the President of the implementation and follow-up mechanisms being set up by Guinea-Bissau national authorities, with United Nations and partners' support, to help to materialize the pledges made by international partners during the round table. He also briefed on the progress and constraints regarding the implementation of security sector reform in Guinea-Bissau. On his part, President Sall acknowledged the continuing vital role of the United Nations and its partners and reaffirmed his engagement to assist stabilization efforts in Guinea-Bissau.

E. Strengthening democratic institutions and enhancing the capacity of State organs to function effectively and constitutionally

39. In order to promote citizen participation, UNIOBGIS assisted civil society organizations from the Bafatá and Cacheu regions with regard to strengthened engagement with the National Assembly on local socioeconomic development. Civil society organizations requested representatives of specialized committees of the National Assembly to visit the regions.

F. Strategic and technical advice and support for the establishment of effective and efficient law enforcement and criminal justice and penitentiary systems

40. Within the reporting period, UNIOGBIS has provided strategic advice and technical support to the national authorities in developing a national policing and internal security strategic plan (2015-2020), envisioned to be the road map for efficient policing in the foreseeable future. This was undertaken through the holding of six workshops bringing together UNIOGBIS and the national counterparts.

41. The United Nations continued to support coordination in the area of police, justice and corrections. On 3 February, 11 magistrates, including two women, graduated from the Judicial Training Centre, which is being supported by UNDP in collaboration with UNIOGBIS. On 19 and 20 February, UNIOGBIS conducted a validation workshop to evaluate the human resources and operational capabilities of the national road traffic system in order to improve perceptions of public authority and security. The assessment brought to the fore the need for expedited approval of the revised National Traffic Code and will provide the basis for the development of standard operating procedures for improved road traffic and further development of new training modules. In addition, UNIOGBIS provided support to the national authorities in the development of standardized police forms, including for incident reports, victim/witness statements, evidence collection, suspect detention, search warrants, declaration of suspect, medical examination, and detention orders. These were adopted immediately by the Public Order Police and the National Police. It is expected that they will be adopted by all policing agencies in the framework of national standards of practice.

42. Since 20 March, UNIOGBIS has been supporting the national registration and survey of police and other law enforcement staff, as part of the ongoing vetting and certification process that stalled in the aftermath of the April 2012 coup. The survey

will provide the relevant data on the members of internal security institutions who joined a service in the past two years and will also be utilized in the next stages of the selection, training and certification processes. The registration survey is expected to be completed by July 2015. A total of 3,200 officers, including 400 women, from policing and internal security institutions have been registered and their data updated in the database so far.

43. From February to June, the Superior Council for Policing and Internal Security Coordination, which comprises the heads of the national police institutions, with the participation of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), held five meetings to strengthen coordination, information-sharing and joint security analysis. UNIOGBIS manages the agenda and runs the secretariat function for these meetings.

44. From April to June, UNIOGBIS provided crime scene and forensic investigations training to 60 officers from different law enforcement agencies in São Domingos, Bafatá and Buba to enhance their capacity to undertake crime scene investigations and also refresh their knowledge of the standard procedures for investigations of violent and property crimes.

45. From 19 to 29 May, UNIOGBIS supported the national law enforcement agencies and the Office of the Prosecutor General in the organization of an operation that used the Mobile INTERPOL Network Device at various land, sea and air ports of entry into Guinea-Bissau. The Prosecutor General's Office deployed prosecutors at each location, along with police personnel. A total of six foreigners holding Guinea-Bissau passports were detained on suspicion of carrying forged identification documents, and six stolen European passports were confiscated during the operation.

46. On 3 March, my Special Representative attended the opening ceremony of the new judicial year in Bissau, chaired by President Vaz. The ceremony included a number of interventions pointing out the defects of the judicial system, namely corruption, political interference and the lack of professionalism of magistrates, judges, civil servants and lawyers, which have negatively affected popular perception of the entire system. In his opening speech, the President reaffirmed the supremacy of the rule of law and reiterated his support for the proposed national programme for justice reform.

47. On 13 March, the National Programme for Justice Reform (2015-2019) was officially launched at the Ministry of Justice. The National Programme comprises five main axes, namely, (a) independence and transparency of the justice sector; (b) efficiency of the justice system; (c) strengthening of human and material capacities; (d) legal reform; and (e) access to justice and law. The Programme has an estimated cost of $48 million. The Government has committed to contributing up to 4 per cent of that amount, and to mobilizing the remaining funds from international partners. The vision of the Government is to reach, by 2019, the full independence and integrity of the judiciary, and to improve access and delivery of justice to the population. The United Nations system in Bissau, notably UNDP, has provided considerable technical and financial support for the preparation of the National Programme.

48. From 4 to 8 and from 18 to 22 May, UNIOGBIS delivered a two-week training session to magistrates of Guinea-Bissau on the resolution of administrative disputes

in collaboration with UNDP, which assists the national counterparts in the management of the Magistrates Training School.

49. During the month of June, as a contribution to the ongoing debate on the Code of Military Justice at the National Assembly, UNIOGBIS assisted the Ministry of Defence in the publication and dissemination among national stakeholders of the draft principles governing the administration of justice through military tribunals, which were discussed during the Annual Forum on Criminal Justice organized by the Ministries of Justice and Defence with UNIOGBIS support in October 2014.

G. Promotion and protection of human rights and human rights monitoring and reporting activities

50. During the period under review, UNIOGBIS worked with police and judicial authorities in support of local religious leaders and civil society organizations such as the Association of Friends of the Child in their mediation efforts to rescue and protect girls in situations of forced marriage. Since January 2015, as a result of the Association's mediation, five girls, aged between 13 and 19, have returned home after their family members signed a commitment not to submit the girls to forced marriage. Monitoring by the Association confirmed that the girls remain safe. A further 26 girls rescued from forced marriage are being cared for in an Association shelter. UNIOGBIS continues to support human rights advocacy on crimes related to forced marriage and is working with law enforcement agencies to identify their needs in order to effectively enforce arrests for these and other gender-based crimes.

51. On 18 and 19 February, UNIOGBIS conducted a workshop in Bissau gathering 60 members of local human rights movements from throughout the country. Participants learned about the most important international human rights treaties and their complementarity with national legislation in Guinea-Bissau as well as how to use basic information-gathering techniques. This kind of training empowers human rights defenders and also helps to develop a loose network of human rights defenders that work together with UNIOGBIS in their respective regions.

52. From 20 April to 7 May, UNIOGBIS held three traditional gatherings (*djumbais*) on Bubaque Island and at Bafatá and Gabú on the need to prevent domestic violence, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, child trafficking and exploitation, and the importance of bringing these cases to justice. Approximately 800 representatives of community-based organizations, youth groups, students from primary and secondary schools and traditional leaders participated in these open debates. The meeting in Bubaque, which was held in collaboration with the local Centre for Access to Justice, concluded with the approval of a letter addressed to the Government and the media, requesting the reactivation of the local court, which has been closed since 2004.

53. From 4 to 8 May, UNIOGBIS, in collaboration with the Judicial Training Centre, concluded a series of training courses on human rights and administration of justice for civil and military judges and prosecutors, lawyers and members of the judiciary police. This is in line with the implementation of the National Programme for Justice Reform (2015-2019).

II. Strategic and technical advice and support to the Government of Guinea-Bissau to combat drug trafficking and transnational organized crime

54. During the reporting period, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in close collaboration with UNIOGBIS, continued to provide capacity-building, logistic support, training and specialized technical assistance to the Transnational Crime Unit and other law enforcement agencies in Bissau, on combating transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking. Throughout the reporting period, the Unit, in conjunction with national law enforcement agencies, conducted intelligence missions and assessments. From February to the beginning of June, the Unit participated in a number of operations.

55. On 26 February, UNIOGBIS and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, with the support of the Peacebuilding Fund, provided the Transnational Crime Unit with a vehicle to strengthen its operational capability. On the same day, the Management Board of the Unit endorsed the nomination of six new police officers to join its structures and authorized the recruitment of six additional staff for the Unit. There are 20 police officers currently assigned to the Unit.

56. Between 27 and 30 April, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UNIOGBIS jointly supported a smuggling training and operations programme for 20 officers from the Judiciary Police, the Transnational Crime Unit, the National Guard and INTERPOL on the use of the Mobile INTERPOL Network Device, as part of the Airport Communication Programme. Funded by the European Union, the latter Programme started in Guinea-Bissau in 2010 and aims at building drug-interdiction capabilities linking selected international airports in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

57. On 26 May, the Management Board of the Transnational Crime Unit approved a standard operating procedure, on transnational organized crime investigations concerning drug trafficking. On 14 July the Board approved three additional standard operating procedures, on combating child trafficking, on identification of fraudulent documents, and on cooperation between law enforcement agencies. Training sessions for 30 police officers on how to implement these practices across the national law enforcement agencies were held from 20 to 30 July. The Transnational Crime Unit continues to develop its intelligence capabilities with the use of a database installed in December 2014. The responsibility for the use of the database was fully transferred to national authorities during the reporting period.

58. On 4 and 5 June, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime organized in Bissau a regional workshop for the transnational crime units in the subregion, with participants from Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The event included discussions on the harmonization of legal frameworks, legal assistance, joint operations, and the identification of challenges and constraints. The workshop concluded with the signature of a joint regional protocol on inter-agency coordination and cooperation with regard to transnational crime units.

59. From 1 to 20 June, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime supported the installation of a drug laboratory in Bissau to be used by all law enforcement agencies of Guinea-Bissau. The technical support was provided by two specialists, one from Spain and the other from Liberia. On the same occasion, a standard

operating procedure on using the police laboratory was elaborated and specialized training was delivered to the national counterparts.

I. Incorporating a gender perspective into peacebuilding, in line with Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008)

60. International Women's Day was commemorated on 8 March in Bissau, with a march attended by members of the Government, the First Lady, representatives of the Office of the President of the Republic, the diplomatic corps and regional and international organizations including my Special Representative. Several side events were held on 6 March, including a parliamentary discussion on the way forward for the Canchungo Declaration. In addition, on 6 and 7 March, UNIOGBIS conducted training on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and the response thereto, for 40 police officers and civil society and women's groups in São Domingos (Cacheu region).

61. On 20 and 21 March, UNIOGBIS, with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, facilitated a workshop in Canchungo (Cacheu region) for women parliamentarians and leaders of the specialized commissions of the National Assembly (10 men and 14 women). The workshop resulted in the establishment of a women's parliamentary caucus, the National Network of Women in Parliament. The parliamentarians identified training gaps and requested further capacity-building on how to read and provide input to bills in parliament through a gender lens, and on lobbying and advocacy. Participants also adopted the Canchungo Declaration as the main strategic document of the caucus.

62. The Canchungo Declaration, an advocacy tool adopted in October 2014 during a gender seminar sponsored by UNIOGBIS, aims to raise the awareness of national authorities about the urgent need to adopt strategies for the greater participation of women in politics and decision-making processes as a necessary condition for the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law. On 11 February, the Declaration was officially presented to the President, the National Assembly and the Government, which pledged to ensure its implementation within the State institutions. During the March workshop, the National Network of Women in Parliament defined as its chief priority actions the introduction of a women's quota through the review of the electoral law and the law on political parties; the dissemination of the laws on female genital mutilation; and tackling domestic violence.

63. From 14 to 17 April, UNIOGBIS supported the Ministries of Defence and Internal Administration in the organization of two workshops for 70 military and police personnel (52 men and 18 women) on gender mainstreaming in the Quinara and Gabú regions. The participants were provided with tools to design plans and implement policies within the security sector with a gender perspective which would include the ongoing reform process and the promotion of female recruitment.

64. From 11 to 18 May, within the framework of the joint European Union-UNDP project to support the supreme audit institutions in the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa and Timor-Leste, the National Network of Women in Parliament conducted a seminar to share experiences with their peers from Cabo Verde on policy leadership and how to lead the debate on State budgets from a gender perspective.

J. Work with the Peacebuilding Commission in support of Guinea-Bissau's peacebuilding priorities

65. From 19 to 21 April, the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota of Brazil, travelled to Bissau where he met with national authorities and international partners. In the wake of the international partners' round table of March 2015, the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration expressed the continuing support of the Commission to the authorities and the people of Guinea-Bissau, and its steadfast commitment to providing assistance in advancing the Government's priorities as outlined in the development plan, including through the implementation of key reforms, such as in the area of security sector reform.

66. On 29 April, the Prime Minister and my Special Representative were the invited speakers at a meeting of the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group. Participating by video conference from Bissau, they briefed the Advisory Group on the opportunities and challenges Guinea-Bissau faced in the wake of the international partners' round table and the United Nations efforts in support of the implementation of Government priorities.

67. On 19 May, the Executive Committee for Peacebuilding Fund programmes in Guinea-Bissau endorsed the 2015-2017 Peacebuilding Priority Plan as the basis for the full re-engagement of the Fund in Guinea-Bissau over the next three years. The Priority Plan, which is closely aligned with Government priorities, will focus on areas of catalytic intervention addressing the drivers of conflict in Guinea-Bissau, including the promotion of national and constructive political dialogue and consensus-building among political, economic and civil society leaders; modernization of defence and security forces; enhancing the independence and impartiality of the justice system in order to increase citizens' confidence in the State's commitment to the rule of law; and access of women and youth to political participation and economic opportunities. The total value of the Plan is $15 million. On 23 June, the Peacebuilding Support Office approved $10 million of funding for the Peacebuilding Priority Plan in Guinea-Bissau.

IV. Cross-cutting issues

A. Integration of the United Nations system

68. During the reporting period, and under the leadership of the Government, the United Nations integrated system in Guinea-Bissau, including resident and non-resident agencies and UNIOGBIS, developed a new partnership framework for the period 2016-2020. This is aligned with the national Strategic and Operational Plan. It is expected that the framework will be signed by the Government in the third quarter. The United Nations system in Guinea-Bissau will support the Government through the new partnership framework between Guinea-Bissau and the United Nations (the United Nations Peacebuilding and Development Assistance Framework 2016-2020) with an estimated budget of about $381 million, including $10 million from the Peacebuilding Fund.

B. Public information

69. During the reporting period, UNIOGBIS broadcast 18 weekly radio programmes through the National Radio as well as a private radio with close to nationwide coverage. Themes covered included human rights; gender equality; impunity and the rule of law; the international partners' round table; Ebola public awareness; environment, climate change and its impact on food security; security sector reform; governance; and general United Nations activities in Guinea-Bissau. In addition, 52 articles on similar themes were published on the UNIOGBIS website in English and Portuguese.

70. On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on 3 May, UNIOGBIS organized a conference on press freedom and ethics with the aim of strengthening the capacity of local journalists. The conference was attended by over 300 participants, including journalists and 200 university students. As part of this activity and with the support of the Peacebuilding Fund, copies of the media law of Guinea-Bissau were distributed to local journalists, media organizations, and the Secretariat of State for Social Communication.

C. Staff safety and security

71. During the period under review, no direct threats were made against United Nations staff. Two incidents of petty crime and two minor non-fatal road traffic accidents involving United Nations staff members were reported.

V. Observations

72. The people of Guinea-Bissau have shown their determination to embrace the path of peace and development. This was clearly manifested in the enthusiastic participation in the general elections in 2014 and, more recently, in the popular support of preparations for the international partners' round table. Such participation reflects the genuine expectations of the people. A year after the restoration of full constitutional order, I call on the political leaders to continue to work closely together so that Guinea-Bissau progresses on its path towards stability and development. I remain committed to working actively with national and regional leaders to support this effort.

73. The resounding success of the partners' round table has brought Guinea-Bissau firmly back into the international fold. I thank the partners of Guinea-Bissau for the commitment they have demonstrated and encourage them to work with the Government to rapidly deliver on the generous pledges made in support of the national Strategic and Operational Plan 2015-2020.

74. The Government of Guinea-Bissau and its international partners must now seize this momentum to cement the foundations for durable peace and sustainable socioeconomic development. I welcome the adoption of the new partnership framework — based on the principles of mutual accountability and effectiveness — between the United Nations and the Government of Guinea-Bissau that is aligned with the national plan. My Special Representative will continue to rally and coordinate international support for the implementation of the partnership framework.

75. I welcome the resumption of the work of the Organizing Commission of the National Conference towards the Consolidation of Peace and Development, whose mandate is to reactivate an inclusive national dialogue for reconciliation. I call on all national stakeholders to use this platform to devise collective and consensual solutions to the problems afflicting the country. The United Nations stands ready to provide political and technical support to the authorities and the Commission as they work to create an environment conducive to frank dialogue among all the people of Guinea-Bissau.

76. I am concerned about the deep-rooted political and social factionalism pervasive among the country's political parties and State institutions. Such divisions continue to pose a serious threat to long-term stability and development in Guinea-Bissau. The need for cooperation between the organs of sovereignty has been made more pressing by the lack of clear separation of roles and responsibilities in the Constitution. I appeal to the leaders of Guinea-Bissau to show strong political will to overcome this challenge through meaningful dialogue. Against this backdrop, inclusive political dialogue and the ongoing review of the Constitution will be critical processes. I urge the organs of sovereignty to work together, set aside their differences in good faith, and nurture a constructive relationship within the parameters of the Constitution for the sake of stability, sustainable peace and durable development.

77. Reform of the defence and security sectors is a sine qua non for durable progress in Guinea-Bissau. In this regard, I note with satisfaction the enactment of the Decree Law on the Special Pension Fund for members of the armed forces and security institutions, which will facilitate demobilization. This is a critical step in modernization and civilian oversight of the military. Now is the time for the leaders of Guinea-Bissau to demonstrate their commitment by fast-tracking this process and mobilizing the required funding, with the cooperation of international partners.

78. I am concerned about the continued weakness of Guinea-Bissau's criminal justice institutions. Justice sector reform is a prerequisite to ensuring the basic rights of the people of Guinea-Bissau and fighting serious and organized crime, including trafficking in drugs and persons. In this regard, I urge the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to implement the National Programme for Justice Reform (2015-2019), the national plan to tackle transnational organized crime and the recommendations made in the Human Rights Council's universal periodic review of Guinea-Bissau of January 2015.

79. The consolidation of the rule of law, the fight against impunity, organized crime and corruption, and the protection and promotion of international human rights are part and parcel of addressing the root causes of instability and building the social contract between the State and people of Guinea-Bissau. I am particularly concerned about the lack of progress in the investigation of, and in establishing accountability mechanisms for, past cases of serious human rights violations.

80. To conclude, I wish to express my appreciation to the staff of UNIOGBIS and the United Nations country team under the leadership of my Special Representative, Miguel Trovoada, as well as to regional and international partners for their continuing contributions to peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau.

United Nations A/69/1006–S/2015/627

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr. General
13 August 2015

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 32
Prevention of armed conflict

Security Council
Seventieth year

Letter dated 13 August 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the memorial report of the Institute for Disarmament and Peace of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, issued on 12 August 2015 on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of Korea's liberation (see annex).

The report illustrates the realistic and scientific validity and vitality of the ideas on independent reunification of the respected Marshal Kim Jong Un and clarifies that the independent reunification of Korea based on these ideas is the cornerstone of ensuring peace and prosperity in North-East Asia.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ja** Song Nam
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-13775 (E) 310815

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 13 August 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Independent reunification of Korea: the cornerstone of ensuring peace and prosperity in North-East Asia

Memorial report of the Institute for Disarmament and Peace, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DPRK

Seventy years have passed since our Korean nation was liberated from the Japanese imperialists' occupation. However, the 70-year period is also a history of national division forced by the US.

During the long period of time, when two or more generations have shifted, our nation, divided into two, has been suffering from unprecedented misery and pain.

In those decades, the world has made tremendous advances, and the times have undergone dramatic changes.

At the time of our national division, colonies and semi-colonies accounted for more than half of the world. However, those countries achieved national independence one after another, and the tendency towards independence, opposing domination and subordination, became the main trend of the world's development.

The cold war between the East and the West, which started at the time of our national division, ended before half a century had elapsed and the "sole super-Power" entered a decline.

Today, even in Asia, North-East Asia finds itself becoming more important in terms of politics, the economy and military.

Geopolitically, North-East Asia is a sensitive region, since the big Powers face each other, and the Korean Peninsula, divided by the US, stands in the middle of it. This makes the region an unparalleled yet highly explosive powder magazine in the world.

Considering the military concentration and the abundant economic potential of the region, North-East Asia is likely to touch off a third world war. On the other hand, the region can also serve as a foothold for preventing an outbreak of a new world war and for propelling world prosperity in the twenty-first century.

Whether North-East Asia will provide a detonating fuse for a new world war or a locomotive engine affecting world prosperity is dependent on the settlement of the Korean Peninsula issue.

The Korean Peninsula issue is, in essence, an issue of reunification. The future of the Korean Peninsula and North-East Asia is dependent on the independent reunification of our nation.

On the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the liberation of the fatherland, the Institute for Disarmament and Peace of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK issues this memorial report to illustrate the scientific accuracy,

validity and vitality of the ideas on independent reunification of the respected Marshal Kim Jong Un.

1. Independence: a guarantee of reunification

The national division of Korea, against the nation's will, was forced by the outside forces.

At the time Korea was liberated, the US came up with a proposal that it should disarm the Japanese Army stationed south of the 38th parallel, and the then Soviet Union, which had entered the anti-Japanese war, agreed to the US proposal, thus separating the Peninsula into two parts.

The US occupied south Korea and established a military Administration to suppress all the patriotic forces desiring the coordinated and balanced development of the Korean nation. The US hastily fabricated a separate puppet regime, thus fixing the country's division.

Thus Korea, although it was neither a war provoker nor a defeated nation like Germany, faced new misery and pain right after its liberation. Behind these facts lie the interests of outside forces, which had been keeping their eyes on the geopolitical value of the Peninsula.

Historically, the Korean Peninsula had been considered an unparalleled and ideal bridgehead to gain a foothold on the continent by those naval Powers that dreamed of aggression on the continent.

The US, a naval force across the Pacific Ocean, dreaming of world hegemony, had a desire to swallow up the whole Korean Peninsula, the eastern bridgehead of the Eurasian continent. But the US could not rival the Korean People's Revolutionary Army and the Red Army of the Soviet Union, which were moving southward, rapidly crushing the Japanese Army.

Under these circumstances, the US hastened to draw a line arbitrarily on the Peninsula, totally ignoring the will and interests of the Korean nation, in order to gain at least half of the Korean Peninsula; the line was the thirty-eighth parallel. Five years later, in 1950, the US, filled with ambition to bring the whole Korean Peninsula under its control, provoked a war of aggression.

The US, having been rolled back to its original place after a humiliating defeat in the Korean War, started full-scale work to transform south Korea into an outpost for aggression against the DPRK and the continent.

However, the US ambition of aggression could not be realized, as the defence capability and war deterrence of the DPRK strengthened day by day, thanks to the line of simultaneously pushing forward the development of the economy and defence, put forward by the great President Kim Il Sung in the 1960s, and the Songun politics of our Great Leaders. The political and military confrontation on the Korean Peninsula has been protracted for a long time.

The DPRK Government and people have made strenuous efforts to realize the independent and peaceful reunification of the country, but these efforts have been doggedly blocked by the US, the practical ruler of south Korea.

It was the US strategic calculation that Korea should not be reunified peacefully on no account until the outbreak of the second Korean war, which was under its preparation.

This is the main cause of our national division that has been prolonged for 70 years.

It is none other than the outside forces that have gained interests in national division for the last 70 years, just like fishing in troubled waters.

It is the outside forces that battened on arms deals and justified their arms build-up for aggression on the continent under the pretext of tension and confrontation between the north and the south, which has been instigated and aggravated by the outside forces. It is also the outside forces that have risen as an "economic giant" from a defeated nation by exploiting the imbalanced development of the divided Korean nation and now dream of reaggression by revitalizing militarism.

There are also some outside forces that are keen on their own interests, while giving lip service to the improvement of inter-Korean relations and keeping a foot in both camps. There are also some other kinds of outside forces that pursue their own interests while acting as if they are benefactors ready to grant a request from one side.

The antagonism and confrontation, rather than reconciliation and cooperation, between the north and the south provide more profit to the outside forces.

Since the neighbouring outside forces around the Korean Peninsula seek different interests in the Korean Peninsula, their attitudes towards the north and the south are naturally different. Some of them, besieged by an ideological confrontation mindset, have been continuously hostile to the DPRK from the first day of national division, and some have shared the history of shedding blood in the same trenches against the Japanese and the American imperialists.

Some outside forces blindly support the unilateral proposal for "reunification of systems", initiated by south Korea, while others maintain dubious attitudes even towards the reunification formula agreed upon by both the north and the south.

Therefore, it is quite clear that the future of the Korean nation will be ruined by outside forces, and Korea will fall victim to a struggle among the outside forces if they are allowed to meddle in national reunification.

Independence is equal to reunification. Independence is the core principle, means and guarantee for reunification. This is the essence of the idea of independent reunification put forward by the respected Marshal Kim Jong Un.

The only way leading to reunification and national survival lies in joining our nation's efforts, while thoroughly rejecting all sorts of interference in the internal matters of our nation and national reunification by any outside forces. Herein lies the invincible truth of the independent reunification idea put forward by the respected Marshal Kim Jong Un, based on the scientific analysis of the historical lessons from the 70-year division.

Recently, the south Korean authorities have made impure solicitation of doing harm to their fellow countrymen, travelling here and there under the guise of

"reunification diplomacy". This is an extremely dangerous act of inviting the calamity of war again to the Peninsula.

The neighbouring outside forces should be aware that granting any unilateral solicitation, which was not agreed upon at all by the north and the south, will be an act of interference in the internal affairs of the Korean nation, and obstructing reunification thus will be construed as hostilities towards the Korean nation in the end. It is kindly requested that they be prudent in dealing with the question of the national reunification of Korea.

2. Peaceful environment and independent reunification

It is quite obvious that continued division constantly destroys the homogeneity of the nation and inseparably involves the possibility of the outbreak of war. This is the most dangerous point.

Distrust between the north and the south is growing serious and, worse still, the south Korean authorities are clinging to the military alliance with the US, hostile to the DPRK, thus heightening the military confrontation and increasing the danger of war on the Korean Peninsula.

Therefore, creating a peaceful environment on the Korean Peninsula is an indispensable requirement for a smooth realization of independent reunification by removing the danger of war and ending the interference by the outside forces simultaneously.

At the present stage, the most pressing task in creating a peaceful environment is to remove the impending danger of war and break the vicious cycle of tension on the Korean Peninsula.

The large-scale war games staged annually in south Korea are the root cause of the actual danger of war and aggravation of tension on the Peninsula.

Even during the period of the worldwide cold war, the issues related to restriction and limitation of the scale and the character of military exercises were discussed as the most serious and prime topics in the dialogues and negotiations for the prevention of war between the East and the West.

The provocative and offensive military exercises staged by the US and the south Korean authorities against the DPRK are not only the most outspoken and specific demonstration of the hostile policy towards the latter but also the most clear expression of direct interference in the internal affairs of the Korean nation by the outside forces.

The respected Marshal Kim Jong Un said as follows: "The United States, the very one that divided our nation into two and has imposed the suffering of national division upon it for 70 years, should desist from pursuing the anachronistic policy of hostility towards the DPRK and reckless acts of aggression and boldly make a policy switch."

The US should see the change of the times and realize that the hostile policy towards the DPRK is nothing but an expired drug on the market.

Now is high time for the US to realize that the provocative war moves bring much more loss than profit to the Korean Peninsula.

Sixty years ago, the DPRK stood against the US with a rifle, but today it has full capability both to deter the latter's nuclear threat with nuclear power and to retaliate against the latter's nuclear provocations.

It is a new reality that the DPRK possesses a mailed fist to counter any kind of war to be chosen by the US.

If the US abandons its hostile policy towards the DPRK and shifts policy to respect the sovereignty, dignity and the will for independent reunification of the Korean nation, then the US can also enjoy respect from the Korean nation.

First and foremost, the US should demonstrate its will to change policy by stopping large-scale war exercises in south Korea and its vicinity.

Currently, the US is trying to mislead world public opinion, alleging that its war drills are "defensive" and "annual", but such sophism cannot befog the truth.

The war drills involve typical offensive moves, such as landing operations and commandos operations, supported by strategic nuclear strike means, with a target of "occupation of Pyongyang". Branding these war drills as "defensive" is nothing but cut-and-dried chop logic, calling black white.

However, the US describes these war drills as trivial daily affairs, alleging them to be "annually staged". Herein lies its sinister intention to make the DPRK become accustomed to its war drills, so as to make a crack in the deterrence and defence posture of the DPRK, while ceaselessly sharpening its hatchet.

The US insists that the military exercises have been conducted for several decades and there is no reason for stopping them. But it is absurd that one cannot correct wrongdoings because one has done it for a long time.

In 1992 and 1994, the US suspended joint military exercises in accordance with the agreement with the DPRK.

This shows that the US can suspend the war drills if it makes a courageous decision, regardless of how long it has staged them.

Once a peaceful environment has been created on the Korean Peninsula, independent reunification will be accelerated. Once reunification has been achieved, it will resolve one of the global hot spots and will further contribute to peace and prosperity in North-East Asia and the world.

It would be fortunate if the US were to look squarely at the reality and shift its policy. If not, the DPRK is fully prepared to counter the US with its own options.

A peaceful environment is really dear to the Korean people, but begging can never bring about real peace.

If the US loses the last chance of changing the hostile policy towards the DPRK, failing to understand the change of the times, its hostile policy will inevitably lead to a war.

If a war breaks out again on the Korean Peninsula after all, it will never be finished with an armistice.

The 70-year national division and the more than 60-year state of instability of neither war nor peace, confronting the world's biggest nuclear Power amid high tension for generations, can no longer be tolerated.

It is a burning sentiment of the Korean People's Army and a popular feeling of the Korean people to face a new war and stage a grand national reunification war if it is forced to do so.

Preparations are already being made to secure the economic interests of foreign countries even in case the reunification is realized through war, let alone the case of peaceful reunification.

It is a consistent stand of the DPRK to ensure that Korean reunification will contribute to the common prosperity of the region, including the neighbouring countries.

3. Improvement of inter-Korean relations and independent national reunification

The history of the 70-year national division is the very history of inter-Korean relations, full of twists and turns.

For the last 70 years, the north and the south have respectively kept following different paths of ideology and faith.

Inter-Korean relations cannot be improved if each side keeps seeking a confrontation of systems while absolutizing its own ideology and system.

Though the people-centred socialist system of our own style is the most advantageous one, the DPRK has never forced it on south Korea.

If they try to force their ideology and systems upon each other, they will never settle the national reunification issue in a peaceful way, but only bring confrontation and war. This is vividly proved by the history of the past 70 years of inter-Korean relations.

With 70 years of division, the Korean Peninsula is forced to stand on the horns of a dilemma of peace or nuclear disaster. The Korean nation is at the crossroads of reunification or permanent division. This reality demands a great turn and change in inter-Korean relations.

If the neighbouring States and countries concerned sincerely wish for peace on and reunification of the Korean Peninsula, they should observe the golden rule regarding north-south relations.

Inter-Korean relations are seriously affected by outside forces, due to the continued substantial rule of the US over south Korea.

During the discussions at the Yalta Conference, in February 1945, on the agenda of settling the colonies after the defeat of Japan, Roosevelt, the then President of the US, asserted that the Korean nation was not capable of building a sovereign and independent State, and that it should be placed under the guardianship of big Powers for 20 to 30 years.

The US disclosed its aggressive ambition of world domination by insulting the Korean nation in this way. And it is still administering its neocolonialism over south Korea even today, when 70 years have passed since the defeat of Japan, a period more than twice as long as that stated in Roosevelt's assertion.

The most sensitive and urgent subject relating to the Korean Peninsula issue is to ease military tension and prevent conflicts. However, the US still exercises command control over armed forces in south Korea.

Even though the return of military control has become the agenda on the table, the south Korean authorities are soliciting the US for its continued control.

It is the historical reality that the directions of inter-Korean relations have been influenced by the attitude and stand of the US.

The north and south have demonstrated their will and spirit of national reunification by drawing up a charter and great programme of national reunification, including the July 4 Joint Statement, the historic June 15 Joint Declaration and the October 4 Declaration.

Yet, the south Korean authorities would abandon any joint agreements, frightened that the US would say no, and on every such occasion would freeze and bring ordeals to inter-Korean relations.

If the US has the will to switch its policy, together with terminating joint military exercises with south Korea, it should not obstruct the Korean people's efforts to bring about a great turn and change in north-south relations.

The other neighbouring countries should also be aware of the complexity and sensitivity of inter-Korean relations and should fully ensure impartiality and prudence in their policies towards the Korean Peninsula.

First of all, they should not instigate the north and the south to confront each other.

Inter-Korean history records many separatists among the successive rulers of south Korea, the wheelers and dealers who lived only for the sake of his or her own group's interests, ignoring national interests by making rebellious solicitations to the outside forces.

Inciting such separatists and confrontationists and accepting their solicitations are dangerous moves that would harm not only others but also oneself.

If another war breaks out on the Korean Peninsula, its calamity and destructiveness will be totally different to that of the 1950s, and the range of the war will no longer be limited to the boundaries of the Korean Peninsula.

Nuclear warheads with explosive power tens of times greater than that of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima will be flying across the Pacific Ocean, and nobody could predict which spark might misfall in which part of the Peninsula's vicinity during the turmoil.

It has been recorded in the history of world war that one of the notorious traditions of the US military is accidental bombing on purpose.

The change of the times, in which the nuclear map of North-East Asia has been drastically modified, clearly shows that it is favourable to the basic interests of all countries in the region to ease the inter-Korean confrontation fundamentally and to bring about a great turn and change in north-south relations towards reconciliation and cooperation.

At the current stage, in order to bring about this great turn and change, both parties are recommended to lower their own colours, stop arguments for and against and treasure the agreements already agreed upon by the north and the south and implement them one by one.

The neighbouring countries are also kindly advised to respect the inter-Korean agreed matters, while not lending their ears to one-sided solicitations. Encouraging only the ways and efforts for coexistence and co-prosperity will be of support to the Korean nation.

It is the firm will of the respected Marshal Kim Jong Un to write a new history by bringing about this great turn and change.

Upholding the idea of national reunification clarified by the respected Marshal Kim Jong Un, the Korean People's Army and the Korean people will join the efforts of our nation and definitely realize the independent reunification of the nation.

12 August, Juche 104 (2015)
Pyongyang